



(11) AU-A1-39,332/78

(12) PATENT SPECIFICATION

ABSTRACT

(19) AU

- (21) 39,332/78 (22) 26.8.77 (23) 28.8.78 (24) 26 8.77
 (43) 6.3.80
 (51)² G07F 17/34
 (54) Bonus arrangement for poker machines
 (71) New Century Novelty Company Pty. Ltd.
 (72) Richards, B.J.
 (74) SF
 (57) It is intended that the 'poker machine throughout this specification refers to gaming machines generally of the type provided by a combined display of indicia on the periphery of rotatable reels.

Claim

1. A poker machine having plural rotatable display reels housed within an outer casing, means activated by a player, for spinning said reels, means for arresting rotation of said reels to display combinations of symbols and/or characters at a display window, means for paying to the player dividends corresponding to predetermined winning combinations when such are displayed, and an arrangement for assigning to the player a bonus dividend, said arrangement comprising an additional display of symbols and/or characters on said casing and above said display window, means for repeatedly indicating by sequential illumination of lamps said symbols and/or characters of said additional display, and means for arresting the sequence of said sequential illumination and maintaining illumination of one lamp when one of at least some of said pre-

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determined winning combinations is displayed, whereby a bonus dividend is assigned to said player if said illuminated lamp indicates on said additional display a symbol or character having a predetermined relationship to said displayed winning combination.

COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA
PATENTS ACT, 1952-69

Application for a Patent

1 We NEW CENTURY NOVELTY COMPANY PTY. LIMITED

COMPLETE AFTER PROVISIONAL SPECIFICATION No. 39332/78

of 40 Kent Road, Mascot, New South Wales, 2020,
Australia

hereby apply for the grant of a Patent for an invention entitled
"BONUS ARRANGEMENT FOR POKER MACHINES"

which is described in the accompanying ~~complete~~ provisional specification.

~~My~~ address for service is:
~~Our~~

Care: SPRUSON & FERGUSON
PATENT ATTORNEYS
ESSO HOUSE, 127 KENT STREET
SYDNEY, NEW SOUTH WALES.
AUSTRALIA.

AUSTRALIAN

1 AUG 1977

PATENT OFFICE

FEES STAMPS TO VALUE OF £ 4
ATTACHED.
MAIL OFFICER

Dated this 19th day of August 1977

SEAL COMMON SEAL of NEW CENTURY
NOVELTY COMPANY PTY. LIMITED
was hereto affixed in the
presence of:

WITNESS

Signature of Applicant

The Commissioner of Patents
Commonwealth of Australia

COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PATENTS ACT 1952-69

DECLARATION IN SUPPORT OF AN APPLICATION
FOR A PATENT OR PATENT OF ADDITION. 39 33 2 176

Full name of
Applicant.

In support of the application made by NEW CENTURY NOVELTY
COMPANY PTY. LIMITED

for a patent for an invention entitled "BONUS ARRANGEMENT
patent of addition FOR POKER MACHINES"

Full name and address
of Declarant.

1. CLIFFORD COLES of 20, MAPLE STREET
LUGBURN
N.S.W. 2210.
Australia

do solemnly and sincerely declare as follows:-

~~1. I am the applicant for the~~ patent.
~~patent of addition.~~

(or, in the case of an application by a body corporate)

1. I am authorised by NEW CENTURY NOVELTY COMPANY PTY.
LIMITED
the applicant for the patent
patent of addition to make this declar-
ation on its behalf.

~~2. I am the actual inventor of the invention.~~

(or, where a person other than the inventor is the applicant)

Full name and address
of Inventor(s).

2. BASIL JAMES RICHARDS

of 71 New South Head Road, Vaucluse, New South
Wales, 2030, Australia

is the actual inventor of the invention and the facts upon which the
applicant is/are entitled to make the application are as follows:

The said company is the assignee of the actual
inventor.

Declared at

Giffney this 19th day of August 1977

C. Cole
Signature of Declarant.

COMMONWEALTH OF AUSTRALIA

PATENTS ACT 1952-69

Form 10

COMPLETE SPECIFICATION

(ORIGINAL)

FOR OFFICE USE :

Class

Int. Class

Application Number : PD-1411
Lodged : 26th August, 1977

Complete Specification Lodged :
Accepted :
Published :

Priority :

Related Art :



Name of Applicant : NEW CENTURY NOVELTY COMPANY PTY. LIMITED

Address of Applicant : 40 Kent Road, Mascot, New South
Wales, 2067, Australia

Actual Inventor : BASIL JAMES RICHARDS

Address for Service : Spruson & Ferguson, Patent Attorneys, Esso House,
127 Kent Street, Sydney, New South Wales, 2000 Australia.

Complete Specification for the invention entitled :

"BONUS ARRANGEMENT FOR POKER MACHINES"

The following statement is a full description of this invention, including the best method of performing it known to me/us :

This invention relates to poker machines. It is intended that the term "poker machine" throughout this specification refers to gaming machines generally of the type providing a combined display of indicia on the periphery of rotatable reels. Although such machines are frequently referred to as poker machines they are also known as gaming, fruit and slot machines.

As it is common practice for a large number of these machines to be displayed in a row or in a common area for play
10 by patrons, frequently, unless close inspection of individual machines is made by a prospective player, it is not readily discernible as to what dividends and additional bonuses are offered by the machine. Invariably, where bonus dividends are offered any unusual illuminated display is not effective until the machine is in use and its display reels are spinning.

It is the main object of this invention to provide on a poker machine a bonus facility, the existence of which facility can be readily ascertained before the machine is operated.

20 To this end the invention in one general form provides a poker machine having plural rotatable display reels housed within an outer casing, means activated by a player for spinning said reels, means for arresting rotation of said reels to display combinations of symbols and/or characters at a display window, means for paying to the player dividends corresponding to predetermined winning combinations when such are displayed, and an arrangement for assigning to the player a bonus dividend, said arrangement comprising an additional display of symbols and/or characters on said casing and above
30 said display window, means for repeatedly indicating by

sequential illumination of lamps said symbols and/or characters of said additional display, and means for arresting the sequence of said sequential illumination and maintaining illumination of one lamp when one of at least some of said predetermined winning combinations is displayed, whereby a bonus dividend is assigned to said player if said illuminated lamp indicates on said additional display a symbol or character having a predetermined relationship to said displayed winning combination.

10 The invention will be better understood with reference to the accompanying drawings, in which:

Fig. 1 is a perspective front view of a poker machine incorporating the bonus dividend arrangement of this invention; and

Fig. 2 is a block diagrammatic representation of the electrical circuitry controlling said bonus dividend arrangement.

20 A preferred embodiment of the invention will now be described with reference to the drawings in which for exemplary purposes the bonus dividend arrangement of the invention is provided on a four-reel poker machine. In all respects the poker machine insofar as display of winning combinations of indicia on the four reels is concerned is of conventional design. It, therefore, consists of an enclosing casing 3 rotatably supporting an operating handle 4 connected with internal mechanism (not shown) for spinning the reels 5 when the handle 4 is activated by a player. The handle 4 is freed for activation when a coin of preselected value has been placed in the coin slot 6 of the machine. The mechanism (not
30 shown) also includes conventional breaking means for arrest-

ing rotation of the reels 5 so that at a window 7 at the front 8 of the casing 4 a display is provided to the player at the completion of each operation of a combination of symbols and/or characters fixed on the periphery of the four reels 5. The mechanism also includes conventional means for automatically paying to the player at a tray 9 dividends corresponding to predetermined winning combinations when they are displayed at the window 7.

The bonus arrangement of the invention consists of a further display 10 towards the upper end 11 of the front 8 of the casing 3, and above normal eye level of a player and may be of any appropriate form whereby individual characters and/or symbols 12 are indicated one at a time by respective illuminated lamps 13 arranged in a row above their characters 12 also in a row. In one form the characters 12 may be etched or printed in a row upon a translucent screen 14. As an alternative to the arrangement shown by Fig. 1 the lamps 13 may be behind the screen 14 and respective characters 12 so that the latter are illuminated by said lamps 13. The lamps 13 are arranged to be illuminated in sequence, although the sequence may be haphazard.

It is a feature of the arrangement that sequential illumination of the lamps 13 occurs whenever power is applied to the machine whether or not the machine is in play. When a predetermined winning combination is displayed in the window 7 of the machine suitable means serve to arrest the illuminating sequence and maintain illumination of lamp or lamps 13 adjacent to one, or several, of the symbols 12. Thus, if for example a winning combination of four Jacks is displayed in the window 7 and a Jack is indicated by the illuminated

lamp 13, this signals to the player that he is entitled to a bonus dividend. This bonus dividend may be paid automatically by the machine or may be paid by other means.

Fig. 2 shows a preferred form of circuit for control of sequential illumination of the lamps 13. On switching the machine on a pulse from a pulse circuit 15 resets a bi-stable latch 16 which in turn enables a clock generator 17 and clock pulses are fed into a 16-stage counter 18. The outputs Q1 to Q16 of the counter 18 are switched "ON" and "OFF" in sequence by each clock pulse, only one output being "ON" at any time, as indicated by Fig. 2A. After output Q16 is switched "ON" the counter 18 returns to output 1 and repeats. Each "Q" output when switched "ON" illuminates a lamp L1 to L16. These lamps L1 to L16 correspond to the row of lamps 13 of Fig. 1. When a mechanism sense device 19 detects the incidence of any one of a number of predetermined winning combinations the bi-stable latch 16 is pulsed via "WIN" input. The output from the latch 16 inhibits the clock generator 17 and in turn the counter 18 will remain on the last activated "Q" output. So that one of the 16 lamps L1 to L16 will remain illuminated and perchance may correspond to the winning combination thereby indicating a bonus to be paid to the player. The next play cycle of the machine will reset the bi-stable latch 16 and enable the clock generator 17, thereby again pulsing the 16 stage counter 18.

The embodiment of Fig. 2 shows a 16-stage counter 18 and lamps L1 to L16 driven in sequence. It will be obvious that the lamps may be connected in a random sequence, and the number of "Q" outputs of counter 18 could be decreased or increased to an indefinite number. It will also be appreci-

ated that although many bonus combinations may be provided for, it will be usual for a bonus to be paid only if the character 12 of the bonus display 10 corresponds to the character 12 of which four are displayed in the window 7. It will only be on the occasion of a predetermined one of the winning combinations being displayed in window 7 when the machine is vacated that sequential illumination of the lamps 13 does not occur for any long period of time.

When the machine is not in play the sequential lamp
10 illumination will continue and will attract the attention of a prospective player to indicate to him that a bonus facility is offered by the machine. To avoid discomfort or distraction to the player, or nearby persons, the lamps 13 of the bonus display 10 should be sufficiently above normal eye level.

A preferred embodiment has been described in the foregoing passages but it should be understood that other forms and refinements are possible within the scope of this invention.

The claims defining the invention are as follows:-

1. A poker machine having plural rotatable display reels housed within an outer casing, means activated by a player, for spinning said reels, means for arresting rotation of said reels to display combinations of symbols and/or characters at a display window, means for paying to the player dividends corresponding to predetermined winning combinations when such are displayed, and an arrangement for assigning to the player a bonus dividend, said arrangement comprising an additional display of symbols and/or characters on said casing and above said display window, means for repeatedly indicating by sequential illumination of lamps said symbols and/or characters of said additional display, and means for arresting the sequence of said sequential illumination and maintaining illumination of one lamp when one of at least some of said predetermined winning combinations is displayed, whereby a bonus dividend is assigned to said player if said illuminated lamp indicates on said additional display a symbol or character having a predetermined relationship to said displayed winning combination.

2. A poker machine according to claim 1, wherein said additional display includes said symbols and/or characters disposed in a row, and said lamps are also disposed in a row parallel and adjacent to said row of symbols and/or characters.

3. A poker machine according to claim 1 or 2, wherein the symbols and/or characters of said additional display are displayed on a translucent screen, and said lamps are positioned behind respective ones of said symbols and/or characters.

4. A poker machine according to any one of the preceding claims, wherein both said repeated indication means and said sequence arresting means are controlled from a sensing device providing two individual outputs in response to two playing conditions of said poker machine, a first one of said conditions being the incidence of one of said winning combinations displayed at said display window and a second one of said conditions being commencement of play of said machine by a patron.

5. A poker machine according to claim 4, wherein the appearance of said first condition causes said sensing device to activate said sequence arresting means, and the appearance of said second condition causes said sensing device to activate said repeated indication means.

6. A poker machine according to claim 5, wherein said lamps are connected to respective ones of stage-outputs of a multi-stage counter and are illuminated upon an output signal therefrom, said repeated indication means includes a pulse generator feeding the input of said counter, and said sequence arresting means includes a latch device which in one condition inhibits said pulse generator.

7. A poker machine according to claim 6, wherein said latch device is switched from said one condition thereof to another condition as the poker machine changes from one of its playing conditions to another.

8. A poker machine substantially as herein described with reference to the accompanying drawings.

DATED this TWENTY-FIFTH day of AUGUST, 1978

NEW CENTURY NOVELTY COMPANY PTY. LIMITED

Patent Attorneys for the Applicant
SPRUSON & FERGUSON

39,332/78

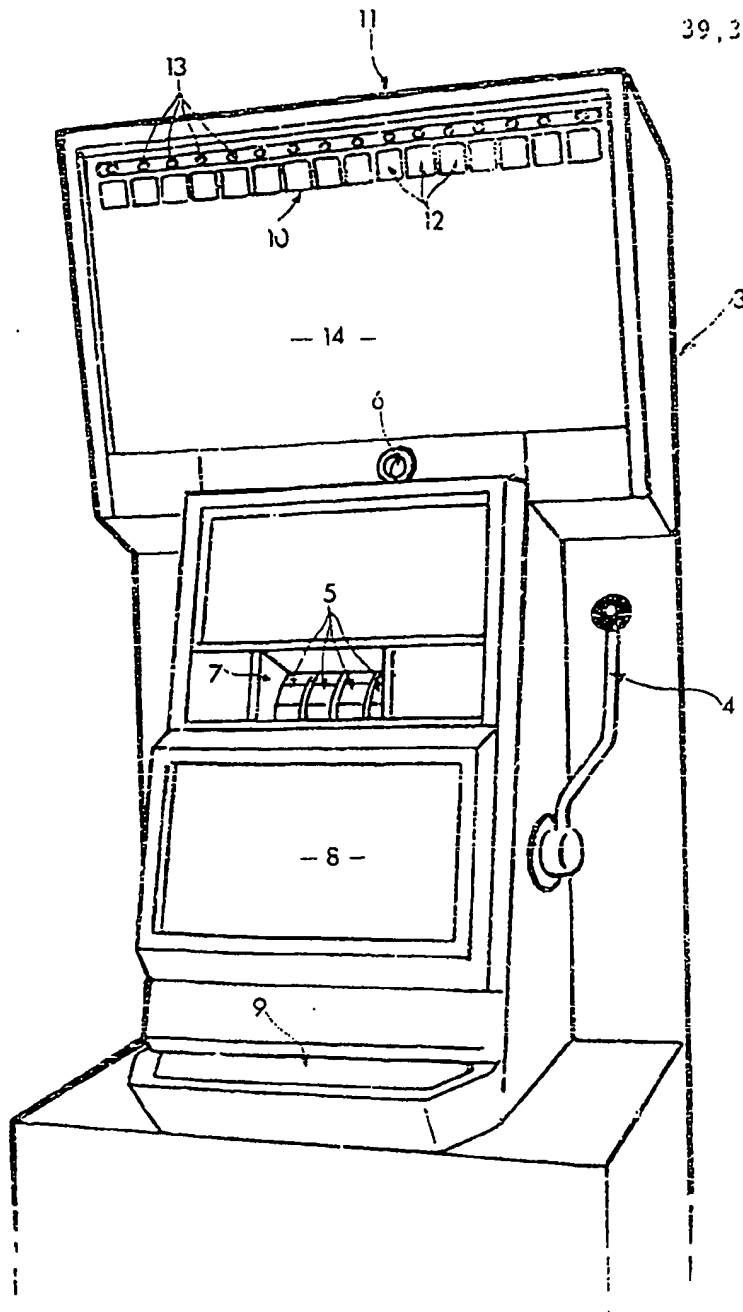


FIG 1

FIG 2

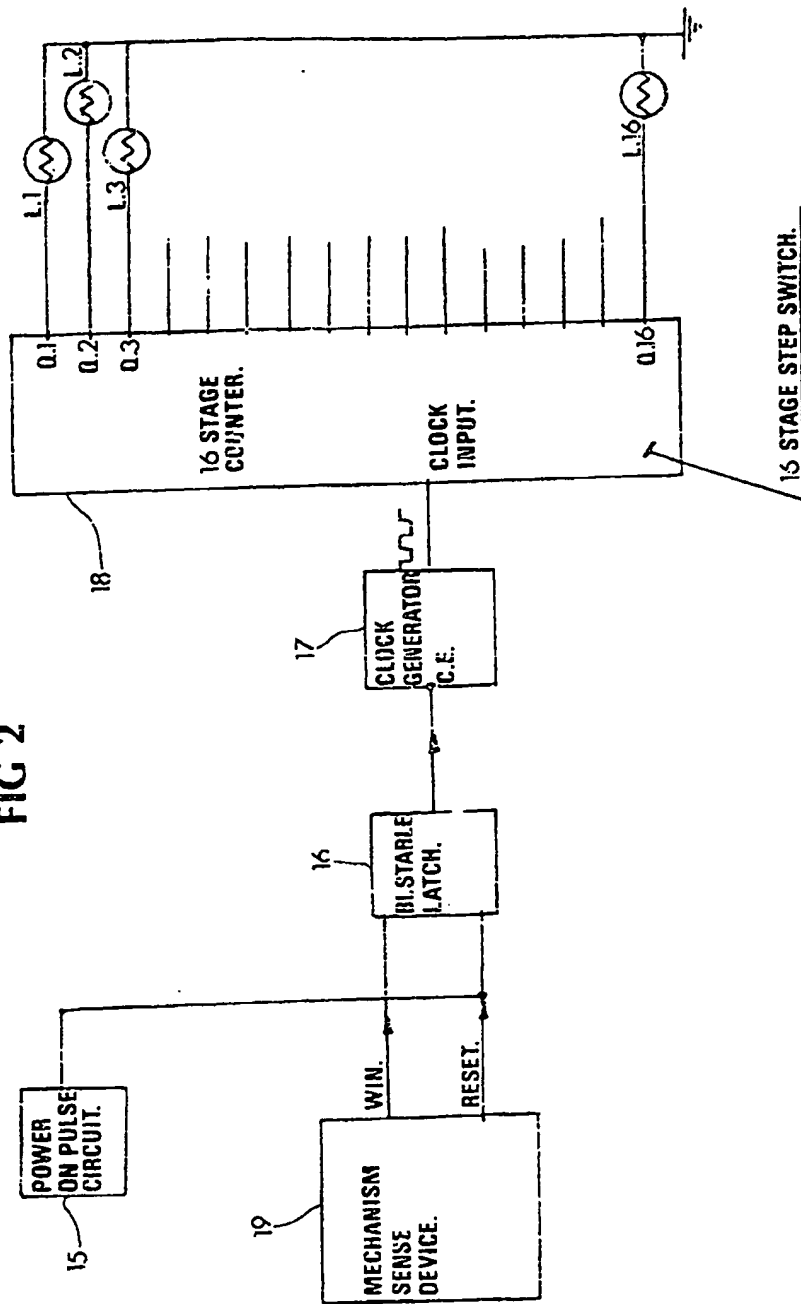
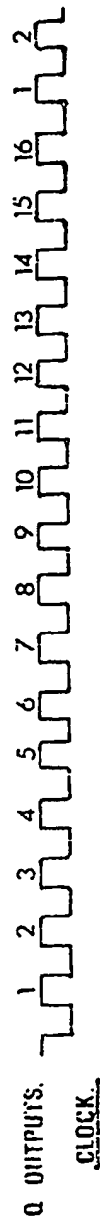


FIG 2A



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